



PUTTING LEARNING FIRST

AN 'OUTSTANDING' SPECIALIST PERFORMING ARTS COLLEGE

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THE LANGTREE SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST COMPANY ("THE ACADEMY TRUST")
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MINUTES of a Meeting of the directors of the Academy Trust held at Langtree School, Woodcote, Reading, RG8 0RA, on Monday 6th June 2016 at 7.00 pm

Present:

Alan Broomhead (AB)
Brian Davies (BD)
Rick Holroyd (RH)
Sue Lea (SL)
Sarah Loveland (SLo)
Neil McIntosh (NM)

Val Nowell (VN)
Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR) – item 3.3 onward
Tracy Sedwell (TS) – Chair
Jules Varnham (JV) – items 1 -
Mark Vitty (MV)
David Warren (DW) – items 1 -

In attendance: Helen Batten, Clerk

Quorum was confirmed.

1. Introduction

- Apologies were received and accepted from Sue Ambler, Regina Grosier and Dennis Rocks. Both JV and DW would need to leave the meeting early.
- Kevin Davies has resigned his position as parent governor with immediate effect. Governors thanked him for his work on behalf of the school.
- No substantive items were notified for AOB.
- No governor declared a material interest in any agenda item for this meeting.

2. Minutes of 21st April 2016

2.1 Minutes which had been circulated were agreed to be an accurate record and signed by TS for filing in school.

2.2 Review of Actions/matters arising: Unless noted below all agreed actions had been completed or would be covered in discussion at this meeting.

Signed (Chair) Date

- **Meeting attendance** (item 1): Concerns have been followed up. TS reminded governors that quorum is required to progress governor business and it is therefore essential to notify absence in advance.
- **Document storage** (item 2.2): An update was requested. **Action: SA**
- **Fair processing notice** (item 2.2): It has not been possible to follow up this enquiry and it was agreed that no further action is required.
- **Lettings (item 3.1)**: The new provider has confirmed that it will be possible for the school to continue to make individual decisions under the new agreement.
- **Voluntary parent contribution** (item 7): RH clarified that although the voluntary contribution request has been agreed in principle, it is hoped that this might not be necessary. Further actions have been postponed until details of the budget deficit reduction plan are agreed.
- **IT network plan** (item 8): RH confirmed that all SIP actions are now in hand, with completion anticipated by September.
- **Social event** (item 11): Proposed dates will be circulated. **Action: TS**

3. Committee updates

3.1 Finance & General Purposes: Minutes of 26th May had been circulated and noted. AB presented key points:

- **Auditors:** The transfer to Critchleys has been completed.
- **Biomass boiler**
 - Critchleys view financial arrangements in a slightly different way to the previous auditors and enquiries are continuing.
 - A query about the accreditation date of the installation has been resolved. It is understood the RHI payments submission has now been made and progress will be followed up. **Action: RH**
- **Budget planning**
 - The committee has identified that emerging issues of student mental health are requiring increasing input by the school. This is in line with national trends and removal of local authority services. These considerations will need to be included in future budget planning.
 - Discussion is ongoing with the EFA around deficit reduction, and if it can be agreed it is considered that a 2-year payback period will be best for the school. Consideration would also need to be given to cash flow and the programme start date.
 - To temporarily alter intake as previously discussed would require two formal variations of the published admissions number and to plan a change for a single year does not therefore represent good strategic planning. The potential effects of such action on other local schools have also been recognised. Governors endorsed the committee decision not to proceed and noted that this can be

reconsidered depending on the outcome of the EFA negotiations and government funding changes.

3.2 Curriculum & Standards: Minutes of 19th April and 17th May had been circulated.

- **Indicative data:** Governors requested clarification of the statement that current data may be optimistic. RH explained that the current Y10 is a very different cohort and this is a very early stage prediction. Some issues identified are already being addressed and a more accurate prediction will be possible later in the year.
- **Revision materials:** In response to a query MV confirmed that all departments advise students on a range of materials so support revision. This is ongoing throughout all years, and not just pre-GCSE. It was agreed that specific information for parents would be helpful and this will be discussed with team leaders. **Action: RH**

JSR joined the meeting at this point.

3.3 Pastoral & Community: Minutes of 12th May had been circulated.

- **Parent & student questionnaire:** RH reported a parent response level over 50%. Students completed the survey by mobile phones, again with a very high response rate. It is planned to repeat the survey annually. Some student responses may be affected by the way the survey was completed and future comparisons will look at trends rather than actual numbers.
- **Cashless payments:** In response to a question RH confirmed that cashless payment systems have been investigated but are too expensive to justify currently. It was agreed that this would help to speed up canteen operations and may encourage uptake and to look again at options when the catering contract is due for renewal.

4. Headteacher's report: The report had been circulated and noted.

Exclusions: Governors were pleased to note the very positive downward trend RH confirmed that apart from the problems associated with two individuals earlier in the year, overall exclusions have been extremely low.

5. SIP and SEF update

5.1 SIP: An update had been circulated showing progress in all areas. RH confirmed that all activities are well on track and a detailed review in July will inform next year's plan. In response to a question RH confirmed that the process of providing regular governor updates is proving an effective way of managing the plan.

5.2 SEF: The SEF was tabled. RH explained that it includes information under the four main Ofsted areas as provided on the governor briefing sheets. This material

will be discussed with team leaders and will also feed into next year's SIP. Governors queried whether the Good judgement for Leadership & Management adequately reflects the progress made since the last inspection. RH explained that the categories are very broad and a lot of travel is possible within Good. Langtree can demonstrate some solid improvements and is currently near the top of the category with more Outstanding features than at the last inspection. This term we will be working with other schools to look at each other's SEF and validate judgements and this will provide a crucial external view of Langtree's position. Further comments will be provided to RH for discussion at the next meeting.

Action: All governors

6. Policy reviews: Policy recommendations had been circulated:

6.1 Health & safety: The policy was approved with some grammatical corrections.

6.2 Equality: Following some discussion about the purpose of the policy, it was agreed rather than seeking to remove inequalities, the aim of the policy is to enshrine the equal value of each individual. The job of the school is to get the best out of every student so appropriate provision cannot promote equality of outcome. Some suggested alterations to ensure the policy reflects these principles will be provided.

Action: NM

JV and DW left the meeting.

6.3 Critical Incident Plan: RH explained some practical aspects and confirmed that the approved plan will be tested. Subject to inclusion of a single line to clarify the purpose of the appendices, the Plan was approved.

6.4 Collective Worship: The policy was approved. RH clarified that tutors do not work to rigid guidelines and will present appropriate class themes, often based around the current word of the week.

6.5 Register of Pecuniary Interests: The policy was approved.

7. Skills audit & '20 Questions': BD provided feedback on information provided. Specific development points and suggested actions will be presented to the next meeting for discussion.

Action: BD

7.1 Skills audit

- The number of 'don't knows' has increased as would be expected with a number of new governors in post, otherwise all areas show improvement.
- Finance skills have particularly improved following recent appointments.

- Facilities knowledge is slightly weaker but it is questionable whether the governing body needs these skills since required expertise is bought in for projects such as the biomass installation.
- The governing body tends to be inward looking, focussing on activities within the school driven by the SIP and SEF, and is a little weaker on external aspects such as developing community or commercial links. Governor activities need to reflect current work by the school in these areas.

7.2 '20 Questions'

- In discussion it was suggested not all the questions are relevant but that overall they provide guidance and an indication of how the governing body is fulfilling its responsibilities.
- It was agreed that external information is required and this is being addressed by questionnaires and work with other schools. The governing body also needs to consider what we are aiming to achieve and what other activities would be useful.

8. Governance succession planning

- A parent election will be run in September. The vacancy will be promoted to new parents in the meantime, with an indication of the particular skills the governing body needs.
- TS confirmed she is willing to continue as Chair for a further year but her governor term will end in 2017. She is able to consider re-appointment at this stage, but this would have to be on the understanding that she may not be able to complete a further full term and a Vice Chair will need to be prepared to step up. TS will also be looking to reduce committee work next year.
- Within the academy agreement it was agreed to look at defining an optimum governance model, which can be altered as necessary but will provide a clear framework for recruitment.

9. Governor training & visits

- Information about activities has been received from the majority of governors and a further request will be circulated. **Action: HB**
- Governors were reminded to notify Mary Taylor-Lane if they will be attending the Open Morning on 28th June.

10. Schedule of meetings 2016-17: The schedule had been circulated and noted.

11. AOB: X40 bus: This service bus used by some students is at risk of discontinuation. No further information is available yet from Thames Travel but the situation will be monitored.

12. Next meeting: Thursday 14th July 2016, 7.00 pm.

TS thanked all governors for their attendance and input and closed the meeting at 9.25 pm.

Signed (Chair) Date

ACTIONS LIST from meeting 6 June 2016:

Minute	Action	By whom	When
2.2	Provide recommendation for online document storage.	SA	July FGB
2.2	Circulate proposed dates for social evening.	TS	Asap
3.1	Check progress of RHI payments submission.	RH	asap
3.2	Discuss with team leaders of advice to parents on revision materials.	RH	July FGB
5.2	Feedback on SEF to RH, for further discussion at July FGB.	All governors	asap
6.2	Provide recommendation on Single Equality policy	NM	July FGB
7	Provide recommended actions arising from skills audit and 20 questions.	BD	July FGB
9	Request updates on governor training and visits.	HB	July FGB

Signed (Chair) Date